

Weekly WorkPlace Wisdom

A Weekly Service To The Business Community From Saddleback Church

GOD'S PURPOSE BEHIND YOUR PROBLEMS

By Rick Warren

Life is a series of problem-solving opportunities. The problems you face will either **defeat** you or **develop** you - depending on how you respond to them. Unfortunately most people fail to see how God wants to use problems for good in their lives. They react foolishly and resent their problems rather than pausing to consider what benefit they might bring.

Here are five ways God wants to use the problems in your life:

1. God uses problems to DIRECT you. Sometimes God must light a fire under you to get you moving. Problems often point us in a new direction and motivate us to change. Is God trying to get your attention? *"Sometimes it takes a painful situation to make us change our ways."* Pr. 20 :30 (GN)

2. God uses problems to INSPECT you. People are like teabags... if you want to know what's inside them, just drop them into hot water! Has God ever tested your faith with a problem? What do problems reveal about you? *"When you have many kinds of troubles, you should be full of joy, because you know that these troubles test your faith, and this will give you patience."* James 1:2-3 (NCV)

3. God uses problems to CORRECT you. Some lessons we learn only through pain and failure. It's likely that as a child your parents told you not to touch a hot stove. But you probably *learned* by being *burned*. Sometimes we only learn the value of something... health, money, a relationship ... by losing it. *"... It was the best thing that could have happened to me, for it taught me to pay attention to your laws."* Ps 119:71-72 (LB)

4. God uses problems to PROTECT you. A problem can be a blessing in disguise if it prevents you from being harmed by something more serious. Last year a friend was fired for refusing to do something unethical that his boss had asked him to do. His unemployment was a problem - but it saved him from being convicted and sent to prison a year later when management's actions were eventually discovered. *"You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good..."* Gen 50:20 (NIV)

5. God uses problems to PERFECT you. Problems, when responded to correctly, are character builders. God is far more interested in your character than your comfort. Your relationship to God and your character are the only two things you're going to take with you into eternity. *"We can rejoice when we run into problems ...they help us learn to be patient. And patience develops strength of character in us and helps us trust God more each time we use it until finally our hope and faith are strong and steady."* Rom. 5:3-4 (LB)

Here's the point: God is at work in your life - even when you do not recognize it or understand it. But it's much easier and profitable when you cooperate with Him!

Until next week...

Discussion Questions:

1. What problem are you experiencing at work that God is using to develop you?
2. What can you learn and do differently from this problem?
3. As you experience problems at work, what can you do to honor God?

